April 18, 2014

The University of Georgia Center for Teaching and Learning recognizes Associate Dean and Professor of Pharmacy George E. Francisco as CTL Teacher of the Week.

George Francisco (right in photo) compares teaching to coaching a sports team. Like coaches, teachers employ a plethora of strategies to maximize their students’ potential to achieve both individual and group goals. Consequently, the successes a teacher experiences, Francisco feels, are directly related to the quality of the “recruits.”

While Francisco acknowledges that not all of his innovative instructional approaches would be heralded as successes, his experiences in the classroom have enabled him to see that each class possesses different strengths and desires. Thus, Francisco constantly assesses student needs to determine what will be the most effective techniques to help them learn.

Examining real life situations is a central element of Francisco's pedagogical style. Framing problem scenarios for students to explore and solve is a gratifying experience for Francisco and results in deep learning for his students. Sharpening students' thought processes while exploring the various solutions they develop to similar cases are key characteristics of the learning environment Francisco constructs.

Francisco's students appreciate his exploratory, interactive, and personable approach to teaching and learning. Alexandra Lowery, a student of Francisco's, described his strategy for teaching as one that “prods his students to identify necessary intervention from a pharmacist,” and, in so doing, “he reveals how much we have learned and fills in knowledge deficits with his wisdom.” Like Lowery, Adam Brown commended Francisco as “exemplifying what it means to be a teacher in the truest sense.” Brown observed that Francisco is “always willing to take time out of his busy schedule to answer a question, offer some advice, or just say hello.” Brown applauded Francisco as more than “a distinguished teacher,” adding: “he has been a mentor and role model for me and represents the kind of professional that I hope to some day become.”

See Francisco’s department bio at: http://cap.rx.uga.edu/index.php/people/faculty/francisco/